Homeless Liaison Worksheet: Determining Homeless Status and School Enrollment

(For individual supervisory union/school district use only. Do not submit to the VT Department of Education)

Person Completing Worksheet _____Date _____

Job Title _____School/Agency _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Email Address _____

This worksheet guides you through the process of determining homeless status and school enrollment options for students in your supervisory union. School enrollment decisions are made based on the best interest of the student and to the extent feasible would keep a child in the school of origin unless doing so would conflict with the parent/youth request.

The homeless status of a student would be decided by the liaison in the supervisory union that serves the area where the student is currently living. The process of determining school enrollment should be student centered and take into account factors such as:

- the age of the child or youth
- the distance of a commute
- personal safety issues
- a student's need for special instruction
- the length of the anticipated stay in temporary shelter or other temporary location, and
- the time remaining in the school year.

If you decide to enroll a homeless student in a school other than the school of origin or the school requested by the parent/youth, you must provide a written explanation of your decision. Step 4 of this **worksheet** guides you in that process.

To assist in identifying homeless students, include a question on your **school enrollment form** asking if the family has "housing issues" and make sure that **homeless information posters** are posted and visible to all students and families.

To document your work with homeless students and to comply with federal regulations **worksheets** and **referral forms** should be kept in the "**Simple Information System**" notebook, available to all Homeless Education Liaisons through the Vermont Department of Education. Please contact Lisa Champney @ *lisa.champney@state.vt.us* or (802) 828-6574.

STUDENT INFORMATION

Age	School(s) Attended	Grade	IEP	504	Regular Ed	Ed Support Team	Other

STEP 1: **Determine whether a child or youth is homeless by using the McKinney Vento Act definition:**

Does this student have a **fixed, regular, <u>and</u> adequate** nighttime residence? Yes _____ No _____

If **No**, where does the student reside: __Shared Housing __Shelter __Motel, Hotel, Campground

Emergency Housing (tent, car, box, etc) please specify: _____

If a student's living situation does not clearly fall into the situations described in the categories above, you should refer to the McKinney Vento definition of "**fixed, regular, <u>and</u> adequate** nighttime residence" and consider the relative permanence of the living arrangements. Determinations of homelessness should be made on a case-by-case basis. Note that incarcerated children and children in foster care are not considered homeless. A youth who is not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian is an **unaccompanied youth**. These questions can assist with this process:

1. Does the family consider themselves to be homeless or having housing issues?
2. How did the family lose their housing? (eviction, destruction or damage of home, abuse or neglect, domestic violence, substance abuse, physical or mental injuries, economic hardship, divorce, etc.)
3. Is the family doubled up with relatives or friends?
4. Is the family paying rent?
5. Is the living arrangement temporary or long term?
6. Does the family have a lease? What is the timeframe for the lease?
7. Is the family looking for permanent housing? If so, where?

☐   This student **does not meet the criteria** for homeless status according to the McKinney Vento Act definition. **You do not need to complete the rest of this form.**

☐   This student **does meet the criteria** for homeless status according to the McKinney Vento Act definition. **Continue on to STEP 2.**

STEP 2: **Enroll the homeless student in school:**

The McKinney Vento Law and Vermont Residency Statutes (H1075) support enrollment in the school of origin or in the school serving the area where the homeless student currently resides. The **school of origin** is the school where the student was enrolled when permanently housed or the school where the student was last enrolled. The **school of residency** is the school serving the area where the student currently resides. Information to take into consideration when determining enrollment decision:

? Continuity of instruction or education program
? Enrollment of siblings
? Location where family is seeking permanent housing
? Timeframe for acquiring permanent housing

1. School where student was enrolled when permanently housed: _____

2. School where student was last enrolled (if different from above):_____

3. School of residency: _____

4. School enrollment preference of the parent/unaccompanied youth: _____

5. Indicate School enrollment decision: _____

Transportation

The Homeless Education Liaison must make sure that transportation is provided, at the request of the parent/student, to and from the school of origin if that is the enrollment decision. The Liaison in the supervisory union where the homeless student currently resides is responsible for arranging transportation to the school of origin. Transportation arrangements must be agreed upon with the Liaison from the receiving supervisory union. Unless otherwise agreed, the cost of providing transportation must be shared equally.

Please note: Federal funds including Title I may not be used to support transportation costs for **Homeless** students. If a homeless student becomes **permanently housed**, then federal funds including Title I may be used to pay for transportation.

1. Will transportation be needed to school of origin: _____ Yes   _____ No
   If no, please explain (e.g. distance, age of student, disability, safety issues, no transportation options available): _____

   _____

2. Estimated round trip mileage from home to school: _____

3. Estimated cost of transportation to school of origin: _____ Daily _____Weekly

4. Type of transportation provided:
   ____ School Bus   ___ Taxi   ___ Personal vehicle reimbursement   ___School staff

   Other: _____

STEP 3: **Provide Comparable Services**

The Homeless Education Liaison is responsible for making sure that a homeless student has access to the full range of educational services available to all students. A homeless student is automatically eligible for **Title I** services and **free meals**. Enrollment and referrals should be made in the following areas as appropriate:

☐ Title I Services   ☐ 504 Plan
☐ Educational Support Team   ☐ After School Programs
☐ Child Nutrition Free Meals   ☐ Before School Program
☐ Special Education Services   ☐ School Guidance
☐ English Language Learners   ☐ Medical, Dental, Mental Health
☐ Early Education Programs including school based Pre-K, Head Start, Even Start

Staff Contacted:

Notes:

Change in Homeless Status: ☐ Yes   ☐ No

Date: _____

Permanent Address and Contact Information: _____

_____

STEP 4: **Notify Parent/Youth of Enrollment Decision**

If the school enrollment decision differs from the enrollment request from the parent/youth, the Homeless Education Liaison must **provide a written enrollment decision** that includes the following information:

- The **enrollment decision**
- **Explanation** of the reasons for the enrollment decision
- **Contact information** for the Homeless Education Liaison
- A copy of **Vermont's Enrollment Dispute Resolution Process** with this contact information (Available online at: http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/pgm_homeless.html
- Provide the following contact information for proceeding with an enrollment decision appeal:

  > Wendy Jill Ross, State Coordinator
  > Education for Homeless Children and Youth
  > Vermont Department of Education
  > 120 State Street
  > Montpelier, Vermont 05620
  > (802) 828-5148
  > wendy.ross@state.vt.us

If an appeal is filed, the SU/SD must immediately enroll the homeless student in the school in which enrollment is sought by the parent/youth, pending resolution of the dispute. Transportation should also be provided pending the outcome of the appeal process.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~

The Vermont Homeless Children and Youth Project provides technical assistance regarding services to homeless children and youth .VHCYP information is available online at:
http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/pgm_homeless.html